

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

OMB-01 /069 W

----- 065754

R 130540Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4003

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2264

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND  
COLOMBO FROM MADRAS FEB 12, 1976 REPEATED FOR YOU

QUOTE

MADRAS 290

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: S. RAMACHANDRAN, FORMER DMK MINISTER, CALLS FOR KAR-  
UNANIDHI TO STEP DOWN OR BE SUSPENDED FROM DMK PRESIDENCY

1. S. RAMACHANDRAN, MINISTER FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN THE  
DISMISSED DMK MINISTRY, STATED FEBRUARY 11 THAT A "SIZEABLE  
SECTION" OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE DMK WAS  
OF THE VIEW THAT FORMER DMK MINISTER AND DMK PREWIDENT KAR-  
UNANIEZI AND OTHER FORMER DMK MINISTERS FACING CORRUPTION  
CHARGES SHOULD RELINGUISH THEIR POSITIONS IN THE PARTY, UNTIL  
THEY ARE PROVED INNOCENT "TO PREVENT THE DMK FROM DISINTEGRATING."  
HE SAID THE DMK'S RANK AND FILE WERE "DEMORALIZED" AFTER THE  
FALL OF THE DMK MINISTRY AND INSTITUTION OF INQUIRY INTO THE  
CORRUPTION CHARGES. "IF KARUNANIDHI AND OTHER FORMER MINISTERS  
DO NOT COME FORWARD VOLUNTARILY TO MAKE THIS SACRIFICE," RAM-  
ACHANDRAN STATED, ".,". GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE DMK (FORMER  
EDUCATION MINISTER V.R. NEDUNCHEZHIAN) SHOULD ACT BOLDLY AND  
DECISIVELY BY SUSPENDING ALL THOSE WHO ARE NOW SUBJECTED TO  
INQUIRY FROM THEIR POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PARTY."

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RAMACHANDRAN SAID THAT NONE OF THE GOVERNMENT DECISIONS AND

ACTIONS CITED IN THE 27 CHARGES LISTED FOR ENQUIRY (IN THE GOVERNOR'S REPORT) HAD BEEN PLACED BEFORE THE DMK CABINET. NOR WERE THE CHARGES LEVELLED AS EARLY AS 1972 BY THE ADMK AND THE CPI EVER RAISED IN THE PARTY FORUM. "NO INDIVIDUAL, HOWEVER GREAT HE MAY BE, CAN EVER BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE DMK, WHICH HAD BEEN BUILT WITH THE BLOOD AND TEARS OF PARTYMEN," HE ADDED. RAMACHANDRAN, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE DMK GENERAL COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, DECLARED THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF QUITTING THE DMK AND JOINING ANY OTHER PARTY.

2. WE ARE RELIABLY INFORMED THAT WHEN NEWSMEN APPROACHED DMK GENERAL SECRETARY NEDUNCHEZHIAN LAST EVENING FOR HIS COMMENTS ON RAMACHANDRAN'S STATEMENT, NEDUNCHEZHIAN SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE DMK WAS THE PROPER FORUM IN WHICH TO MAKE SUCH PROPOSALS AND THE GENERAL COUNCIL WAS THE PROPER BODY TO MAKE A DECISION ON THE MATTER. BUT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE, HE SAID, FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL TO HAVE AN EARLY MEETING ON THE ISSUE BECAUSE MANY OF ITS MEMBERS WERE UNDER ARREST. (NONE OF THIS WAS REPORTED IN THE PRESS.)

3. RAMACHANDRAN IS THE FIRST RANKING DMK LEADER TO OPENLY DEMAND ACTION AGAINST KARUNANIDHI AND HIS COLLEAGUES WHO ARE FACING CORRUPTION CHARGES. RELATIONS BETWEEN KARUNANIDHI AND RAMACHANDRAN, A WELL-EDUCATED, BRIGHT YOUNG ENGINEER, HAVE NOT BEEN CORDIAL, AND WHEN KARUNANIDHI RESHUFFLED MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS IN SEPTEMBER 1975, RAMACHANDRAN WAS SHIFTED FROM TRANSPORT TO THE MINOR PORTFOLIO OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. KARUNANIDHI HAD REJECTED SIMILAR DEMANDS THAT HE STEP DOWN AT THE TIME OF THE DMK-ADMK SPLIT IN 1972 AND WHEN THE DMK LOST SEVERAL BY-ELECTIONS IN 1974. THE ADMK HAS IN THE PAST DEMANDED THE REMOVAL OF KARUNANIDHI FROM THE CHIEF MINISTERSHIP AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE DMK AS THE PRICE OF ITS RECONCILIATION WITH THE DMK.

4. RAMACHANDRAN'S PROPOSAL MAY HAVE GROWING APPEAL TO THE OLD LINE ELEMENTS OF THE DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENT IN BOTH THE DMK AND ADMK. THE SPATE OF RESIGNATIONS FROM THE DMK, EVEN THROUGH LARGELY DUE TO POLICE COERCION, AND THE OPEN WARNINGS BY CONGRESS LEADERS AGAINST ABQUITTING DMK MEMBERS INTO THE CONGRESS, APPEAR TO BE CAUSING SOME CONCERN TO MEN WHO MATTER IN THE DMK. THERE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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ALSO SOME APPREHENSION IN THE ADMK THAT, DESPITE RNI SUPPORT TO MRL. GANDHI, IT MAY END UP OUT IN THE COLD IF THE REUNITED CONGRESS BELIEVES IT CAN DO WITHOUT THE ADMK AND MAY COME TO SHARE THE FATE OF THE DMK UNDER PRESIDENT'S RULE. WHILE WE DO NOT FORESEE AN EARLY RECONCILIATION OF THE ADMK WITH THE DMK EVEN IF KARUNANIDHI STEPPED DOWN BECAUSE THE ADMK IS STILL HOPING FOR A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING AN ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENT, WITH THE CONGRESS, THOSE DMK LEADERS WHO ARE UNTARNISHED BY

CORRUPTION AND OTHER CHARGES MAY BEGIN ASSERTING THEMSELVES FOR  
A CHANGE IN PARTY LEADERSHIP IN ORDER TO SAVE THE PARTY FROM  
FURTHER DISINTEGRATION. SIGNED EAVES  
UNQUOTE  
SAXBE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CORRUPTION, GOVERNMENT REFORM, GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976NEWDE02264  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760055-0233  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760251/aaaabsdp.tel  
**Line Count:** 120  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <18 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <21 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** S. RAMACHANDRAN, FORMER DMK MINISTER, CALLS FOR KAR- UNANIDHI TO STEP DOWN OR BE SUSPENDED FROM DMK PRESIDENCY  
**TAGS:** PINT, IN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006